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ABSTRACT

This journal issue is a collection of papers describing research on Hispanic families conducted at the Hispanic Research Center, Fordham University, New York. The first article, "Research Issues concerning the Puerto Rican Child and Family," by Lloyd H. Rogler, reviews two research projects on health conditions and the plight of Puerto Rican children and their families in New York City. The second article, "Intergenerational Change in Ethnic Identity in the Puerto Rican Family" by Rogler and Rosemary Santana Cooney, analyzes the ethnic identity of 100 intergenerationally linked Puerto Rican families in New York and adjoining states. In the third article, "Puerto Rican Fertility: An Examination of Social Characteristics, Assimilation, and Minority Status Variables," Cooney, Rogler, and Edna Schroeder examine Goldscheider and Uhlenberg's theory of differentials in minority groups, with emphasis on Puerto Rican fertility. The fourth article, "Workshop: Hispanic Intermarriage in New York City" by Elizabeth Collado, reports on a workshop that addressed the findings and recommendations of Gurak and Fitzpatrick's monograph on Hispanic marriages in New York City in 1975. Ian A. Canino focuses on the impact of the environment on mental health of Puerto Ricans in New York City in the fifth article, "The Puerto Rican Child: A Minority at Risk." The sixth article, "Data Issues of the Puerto Rican Child Project," written by Brian Earley, evaluates data on the mental health of Puerto Rican children gathered from the Hispanic Research Center's ongoing Puerto Rican Child Study. Rose Marie Hurrell's article, "The Intellectual Assessment of Hispanic Children: Problems and Alternatives," reviews intelligence tests for Hispanic children and recommends alternatives to conventional assessment methods. The eighth article, "The Hispanic Child: A Multidimensional Approach to Mental Health" by Isaura M. Linares, discusses multi-disciplinary research team efforts and the appropriateness of this methodology in assessing the mental health of Hispanic children. The final article, "An Alternative Approach to the Study of Lower Socioeconomic Status, Urban Puerto Rican Children," written by Damaris Lugo-Frey, reviews the literature on Puerto Rican children and suggests an approach to studying the mental health needs of the Puerto Rican population that focuses on this group's cultural strengths. (AOS)

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Research Issues Concerning the Puerto Rican Child and Family

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RESEARCH BULLETIN

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RESEARCH ISSUES CONCERNING THE PUERTO RICAN CHILD AND FAMILY

By Lloyd H. Rogler, Director of the Hispanic Research Center, and Albert Schweitzer Professor

THIS ISSUE of the Research Bulletin is devoted to reporting on the progress of two research projects now under way at the Hispanic Research Center. The first two reports included here are summarized versions of papers that were presented to the American Sociological Association Meeting in 1979. They describe some of the preliminary findings of a study on intergenerational Puerto Rican families, a study which antedates the establishment of the Hispanic Research Center. When I assumed the Albert Schweitzer Chair at Fordham University, I was provided with the opportunity to develop ideas and pose questions relevant to the Puerto Rican experience in New York City. Thus, the intergenerational Puerto Rican family study represented not only the continuation of years of personal field research on Puerto Ricans both on the island and on the mainland, but also an integration of previous studies on the Puerto Rican family.

With the establishment of the Hispanic Research Center, the need to intensify research on all aspects of the Puerto Rican family became more apparent. The intergenerational Puerto Rican family study, thus, became the first step in a program of research focusing on the Hispanic experience in the United States. One of the first projects undertaken by the Center was to publish a study of the health conditions of Puerto Ricans in New York City. This study resulted in the Center's first monograph and in a series of recommendations concerning public policy. The study highlighted the often-dramatic plight of inner city Puerto Rican children, and pointed to the urgent need for increasing research in this area. Mindful of this need, the Center undertook its Puerto Rican child study devoted to investigating the particular needs of Puerto Rican children in the mental health area. This project is now in the data-analysis phase and the reader will find here a series of stimulating papers derived from that study. These reports were originally presented to the Puerto Rican Family Institute Conference in New York City in November 1979.

All these studies are, I believe, centrally relevant to issues of mental health, public policy, and social practice. We hope that the findings of these studies on Puerto Rican families and children will lead us in the future to modify, develop, or even discard some of the ideas with which we started, and increase our policy-relevant knowledge of this vital aspect of the Puerto Rican experience in the United States.

RESEARCH REPORT
INTERGENERATIONAL CHANGE IN ETHNIC IDENTITY IN THE PUERTO RICAN FAMILY

By Lloyd H. Rogler, Director, Hispanic Research Center, and Albert Schweitzer Professor, Fordham University,

and

Rosemary Santana Cooney, Research Associate, Hispanic Research Center, and Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Fordham University

IN SPITE OF THE theoretical and empirical importance of intergenerational change in the analysis of ethnic groups in American society, very little research has focused upon intergenerational change in ethnic identity within the family. Generational comparisons are usually made between unrelated individuals, for example, between ethnic group members born in a foreign country (first generation), those born in the United States of foreign or mixed parentage (second generation), and those born in the United States of native-born members of the ethnic group (third generation). An implicit assumption underlying these comparisons is that the difference observed between such unrelated individuals reflects changes occurring within immigrant families. Such an assumption can be tested only by studying the ethnic identity of parents and their children directly.

This Paper presents an analysis of

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ethnic identity based upon an intensive study of 100 intergenerationally linked Puerto Rican nuclear families in metropolitan New York and adjoining states, during the period from 1973 to 1976. It begins with the theoretical postulate that ethnic identity is influenced by receptivity to external influences stemming from the host environment and by length of exposure to the new host environment.

This postulate justifies the inclusion of the following independent variables: generation, education, age at arrival, length of residence on the mainland, sex, Puerto Rican composition of the neighborhood, and family cohesion. Three important components of ethnic identity included in our study are subjective affiliation with Puerto Rican values, mastery and use of the Spanish and English languages, and attitudinal preferences for Puerto Rican culture.

We pose the following research questions: (1) Are there significant differences in ethnic identity between parents and their children? (2) When each generation is taken separately, what factors influence ethnic identity in intergenerationally linked parents and children? (3) What mechanisms contribute to intergenerational change in ethnic identity in the family?

At the bivariate level the findings for the study group as a whole are consistent with the pattern of findings in the literature. Thus,in answer to our first question, language usage, language ability, and attitudinal preference components show expected differences between children and parents. Children are less likely to speak Spanish with other persons, are less likely to listen to Spanish on television and radio, report less language ability in Spanish and less of a preference for Puerto Rican culture than their parents. The subjective ethnic affiliation component shows a significant difference between children and only one parent, the mother. Children were less likely to consider themselves exclusively Puerto Rican than either parent, but only the difference between children and mothers was significant.

Before addressing the second and third questions, we examined the bivariate relationship of the independent variables to ethnic identity separately for mothers, fathers, and children. We found a surprising contrast in the importance of education for parents and children. For both parents education is significantly related to a majority of the ethnic identity components, but for children education is significantly related only to knowledge of English.

We then undertook a closer examination of the nature of the relationship between education and ethnic identity. This revealed that ethnic identity declined with education, from no schooling through high school graduation, but that the ethnic identity of those who had attended college, graduated from college, or went on to postgraduate training is similar to the ethnic identity of those who had only graduated from high school.

In contrast to the emphasis on bivariate relationships which predominates in the literature, our investigation of variables affecting the ethnic identity of mothers, fathers, and their children uses an analysis technique which assesses the independent contribution of each variable on ethnic identity after theoretically prior variables have been controlled. The most striking findings of our research are that both education, from no schooling to high school graduation, and age of arrival have significant independent effects upon the ethnic identity of parents and children (Question 2) and that child's education and age at arrival are significantly and independently related to changes in ethnic identity in the family (Question 3). Once these variables are controlled, the other independent variables are no longer significantly related to ethnic identity.

The fundamental importance of the age at arrival variable implicates issues of substance and method. The younger the person is upon arrival, the more receptive he or she is to influences stemming from the host society. One mechanism underlying the consistent finding of significant differences in ethnic identity between generations, when generations are defined by birthplace of the respondent and his ancestors, is generational differences in age at arrival. Moreover, age at arrival is also a significant variable affecting ethnic identity within generations differentiated by birthplace. Thus, ethnic identity cannot be equated simply with birthplace of respondent and his ancestors; rather, it varies according to age of exposure to the new host environment.

Although the children's Puerto Rican ethnic identity is significantly less than that of their parents, the pattern of children's responses suggests movement to biculturalism as opposed to complete assimilation. Only 45 percent of the children consider themselves to be exclusively Puerto Rican; the remaining children consider themselves to be part-Puerto Rican and part-American. Not even one of the Puerto Rican children considers himself or herself to be exclusively American. Children also tend to use both English and Spanish in speaking to family, friends, and neighbors as opposed to English only. The children with a good knowledge of English did not abandon Spanish and reported their knowledge of Spanish to be better than average. In terms of attitudinal preferences, the children's responses are closer to "no preference" than to preference for American culture. Only in terms of the language used in the mass media do the children tend to rely more on English than on both languages.

We believe that the vitality of biculturalism explains why the strength of ethnic identity remains stable with increases in education after high school graduation. During approximately the last fifteen years there has been a renewed awareness of and appreciation for the contribution of immigrant groups to a pluralistic American society. In the ethnic neighborhoods of cities with large concentrations of immigrant populations, such as New York, the mass culture's celebration of ethnicity converges upon and legitimizes traditional ethnic-day events, from parades and the paying of homage to historical personages in the in-group, to art displays, concerts, and athletic events. Such events are a part of the political structure of the locale and represent the collective products of a multitude of ethnically-based organizations. Thus, the celebration of ethnicity is an organizational phenomenon.

We believe that graduation from high school projects the person into the celebration of ethnicity through the medium of organizations. Such exposure tends to stabilize ethnic identity. The suggestion is that persons with more education participate more in their own ethnically based organizations which have direct relevance to their ethnicity; whether the organization is an action group pursuing goals external to itself or an expressive group focusing upon sociability among the members, the celebration of ethnicity is inextricably

tied to group participation. Consequently, we are left with the need to modify the original theoretical postulate guiding the research by altering the overly simple assumption that the host society's environment uniformly represents a nonethnic force. If San Juan is being Americanized, it is no less true that New York City is being Hispanicized.

PUERTO RICAN FERTILITY: AN EXAMINATION OF SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS, ASSIMILATION, AND MINORITY STATUS VARIABLES

By Rosemary Santana Cooney, Research Associate, Hispanic Research Center, and Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Fordham University,

and

Lloyd H. Rogler, Director, Hispanic Research Center, and Albert Schweitzer Professor, Fordham University,

and

Edna Schroeder, NIMH Trainee and Doctoral Candidate, Department of Sociology, Fordham University

THIS STUDY EXAMINES the Goldscheider and Uhlenberg theory of differentials in minority group fertility by making a direct assessment of the importance of assimilation and minority status variables on Puerto Rican fertility behavior before and after controlling for social characteristics. The major purpose of Goldscheider and Uhlenberg's work was to challenge the prevailing thesis that ethnic fertility differences are explained solely by differences in social, demographic, and economic attributes. Goldscheider and Uhlenberg proposed that minority group status is an independent variable affecting ethnic fertility differences. The dimensions of minority group status discussed as relevant to ethnic fertility behavior included both the cultural heritage of the group and the difficulties minority group members encounter in the struggle to improve their situation. These difficulties, combined with a desire for acculturation and mobility, create insecurities. To counteract these insecurities and overcome the disadvantages associated with minority group membership, childbearing may be limited or deferred.

Although Goldscheider and Uhlenberg discuss both the assimilation and insecurity dimensions of minority groups, the influence of the insecurity dimension of minority status has not been directly measured. Moreover, the influence of assimilation as an independent factor affecting ethnic fertility differentials has been largely ignored or equated with social characteristics. Thus, this study represents the most comprehensive examination to date of the Goldscheider and Uhlenberg theory in the context of one minority group.

The Data Set

This research is based on data gathered as part of a larger project focused on continuity and change in the Puerto Rican family. The data set represents an in-depth study of two generations of Puerto Rican husband and wife families of differing socioeconomic status in the New York metropolitan area. The study covers the period from 1973 to 1976.

By dividing the data set into parent-generation mothers and child-generation daughters/daughters-in-law, we have two samples of Puerto Rican women differing in ways fundamental to studying their fertility behavior. (These two groups will be referred to as the older and younger generation, respectively). The older generation, whose mean age is 53, have completed childbearing, while the younger generation, whose mean age is 29, are in their primary childbearing ages.

The older generation were born and raised in Puerto Rico, and came to the United States in their mid-twenties. Thus, their childbearing period overlaps their residence in Puerto Rico and their early years on the mainland.

The younger generation were predominantly born on the mainland or arrived during their pre-adolescent years. Thus, their childbearing period reflects continuity within the mainland's social environment.

For the older generation, the influence of presently measured variables, especially the assimilation and minority insecurities variables, on past fertility works against finding strong relationships because of the time lag and because early childbearing occurred in Puerto Rico. For the younger generation, the measurements coincide temporally with their childbearing years and residence in the United States. These methodological considerations mean that, in comparison to the older generation, the younger generation represents a more adequate study group for the task of examining the Goldscheider and Uhlenberg theory of minority group fertility.

There is in fact a remarkably good fit between the younger generation's characteristics and the three preconditions Goldscheider and Uhlenberg argue should be present for the insecurities of minority status to depress fertility:

1) Acculturative gains are accompanied by a wish for acculturation. The pattern of findings demonstrating the acculturative gains of the younger generation over the older generation is strong and persuasive according to the

acquisition of, use of, and exposure to English as the host society's language; the values of familism and fatalism, as well as the modernity orientation; and in the subjective affiliation with Puerto Rican and/or American values. Differences in the wish for acculturation can be inferred from other sets of items: the younger generation of Puerto Rican wives is less likely than the older generation to have a strong preference that their children keep Puerto Rican ways, less likely to prefer that their children marry Puerto Ricans, and less likely to plan to return to Puerto Rico in retirement.

2) There is an equalization of social and economic characteristics (particularly in the middle or upper social classes) and/or a desire for social and economic mobility. Equalization of social and economic characteristics at the middle class level is also greater for the younger generation. Indicative of a desire for upward social mobility is the fact that the older generation is less likely than the younger generation to desire that their sons enter the traditionally high-status professions of law and medicine.

3) The absence of both a pro-natalist ideology and a norm discouraging the use of efficient contraceptives. The younger generation more often than the older generation believe that it is necessary for husbands and wives to limit their procreation. In both generations there is an absence of a pro-natalist ideology and no cultural norm discouraging the use of efficient contraceptives.

In sum, this pattern of findings demonstrates that theoretically the younger generation fits the preconditions required for an assessment of the theory.

Variables

Social characteristics in this analysis include: age at first marriage, duration of all marriages, employment before marriage, father's main occupation, woman's education, husband's present occupation, and woman's present employment status.

Assimilation variables include: language spoken with husband, children, and friends; language preferred on television and radio; knowledge of English; modernity orientation; familism; fatalism; frequency of church attendance; subjective affiliation as exclusively Puerto Rican, part-Puerto Rican and part-American, exclusively American, or other; Puerto Rican composition of neighborhood; and Puerto Rican composition of friends.

Minority insecurity variables include: belief that discrimination makes it harder for minority members to improve their social situation; desire to live in neighborhoods with non-Puerto Ricans while living in a predominantly Puerto Rican neighborhood; and desire for non-Puerto Rican friends while having none.

Findings

The major findings of our study are: (1) The most important factor explaining fertility is social characteristics. The primary importance of social characteristics is consistent with the theoretical and research literature on fertility behavior. (2) Before controlling for social characteristics, only two of the ten assimilation variables show a significant relationship with fertility for the younger and older generations. Only knowledge of English and Puerto Rican composition of neighborhood are significant for the older generation. For the younger generation, the only two significant variables are frequency of church attendance and Puerto Rican composition of neighborhood. The relationships are in the expected direction: a higher concentration of Puerto Ricans in the neighborhood, a lower proficiency in English, and a higher frequency of church attendance all are related to higher fertility. (3) Before controlling for social characteristics, minority insecurities is significant only for the younger generation. For this generation both perception of discrimination and unfulfilled desire for non-Puerto Rican friends are significant and negatively related to fertility.

Given the priority of the relationship of social characteristics with fertility and the known inter-relationship of such social characteristics as education and occupation with the assimilation variables and possibly with minority status variables, will the assimilation and minority status variables significantly increase our understanding of the fertility behavior of Puerto Rican women once social characteristics are controlled?

We find that for the older generation the answer is no. For the younger generation both frequency of church attendance and unfulfilled desire for non-Puerto Rican friends have an independent effect on fertility.

Conclusion

In Goldscheider and Uhlenberg's original discussion, the importance of integration into the Catholic Church was highlighted. In our study, after controlling for social characteristics, we found that the only assimilation variable significantly related to fertility behavior of the younger generation was the frequency of church attendance. While the influence of religious affiliation on fertility may be declining in the larger population, it is clear that the degree of integration into organized religion is still an important factor affecting the current fertility of Puerto Rican wives. Goldscheider and Uhlenberg's contention that striving for primary group acceptance is associated with insecurities that manifest themselves in lowered fertility is supported among the younger generation by the significance of the unfulfilled desire for non-Puerto Rican friends, even after controlling for social characteristics and frequency of church attendance.

Rather than inferring that assimilation or minority status affects minority group fertility behavior, we have been able to demonstrate through direct measurement that certain aspects of assimilation and minority status exert a significant, independent effect on the fertility behavior of the younger generation of Puerto Rican wives. At the same time, the answer to the question of why some aspects and not others are related significantly to fertility awaits research focusing upon the complex interplay of social and psychological processes in operation as the insecurities of minority status are experienced during assimilation. The insecurity hypothesis does supplement the importance of socioeconomic and assimilation factors for the younger generation in what should be an ever increasing effort to understand more fully fertility differentials of minority groups.

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WORKSHOP:
HISPANIC INTERMARRIAGE IN NEW YORK CITY

By Elizabeth Collado, Staff Member, Hispanic Research Center

On February 1, 1980 the Hispanic Research Center was host to a Workshop held to discuss the findings and recommendations contained in the recently published monograph, Hispanic Intermarriage in New York City: 1975 written by Dr. Douglas T. Gurak and Reverend Joseph P. Fitzpatrick. The Workshop attracted public officials, professionals from varied disciplines, and other persons with an interest in the welfare of the Hispanic population of the city. The reunion of such a diverse group resulted in a discussion centering upon questions regarding Hispanic intermarriage as brought forth by the study.

In his welcoming statement, Dr. Lloyd H. Rogler, Director of the Hispanic Research Center, reiterated three major objectives of the Center. These are: (1) to conduct research on the mental health needs of Hispanic populations, (2) to publish the findings of such research, and (3) to organize forums for the discussion of issues affecting Hispanics in the United States.

Because marriage forms a part of the life cycle of most people, the study of this institution is relevant to Hispanic mental well-being, as Dr. Gurak indicated in his presentation of an overview of the study. He noted the central purpose of the study as being the investigation of assimilation behavior among Hispanic groups in New York City. It was the interest in this process which gave initial impetus to the undertaking of the study.

Reverend Joseph Fitzpatrick, who has conducted studies on this topic in the past, has long been interested in assimilation processes among Hispanics, particularly among Puerto Ricans. He steered the conversation toward the explanation of those tables within the monograph which best illustrated the study's major findings.

Intermarriage is a fundamental indicator of assimilation and of the structure of intergroup relations and, in many cases, symbolizes the social situation of the participants in such unions. The incidence of intermarriage demonstrates that different subgroups are interacting at a variety of levels – the workplace, recreational sites, or places of intellectual exchange.

The source of data used to measure intermarriage and, consequently, the assimilation process were the 1975 marriage records collected by New York City for administrative purposes. Though such records are not maintained for research purposes, New York City's marriage records were found to be more detailed than those kept by other jurisdictions in other parts of the country. These records have indicated that approximately 22 percent of all marriages in New York City in 1975 involved Hispanics.

Outgroup marriages in the study involve five categories of people: Dominicans, Cubans, Puerto Ricans, South Americans, and Central Americans (including Mexicans). Intermarriage was operationalized by the researchers as matrimony between Hispanics of the aforementioned categories (inter-Hispanic) as well as with non-Hispanics, particularly third-generation Americans.

Relevant Findings

The major points brought to light by the analysis show that intermarriage rates are high for various Hispanic groups, and especially among the second-generation Hispanics, many intermarriages involve unions with third-generation Americans. First-generation Dominicans, but especially the Puerto Rican group, constitute the major exceptions to this pattern.

Exogamous marriages were found to be highly correlated with socioeconomic status, as indicated by the occupational position of Hispanic group members. The study found that those Hispanics with the largest outgroup marriage rates consistently held higher status occupations. A larger proportion of Cubans, South Americans, and Central Americans are situated in white-collar occupations than either Dominicans or Puerto Ricans. In fact, Puerto Ricans were found to have the lowest occupational status of all the Hispanic categories. Hence, Dominicans, Puerto Ricans and Chicanos fall into the lower sector of the social pyramid while the Cubans, Central Americans, and South Americans are more on par with middle class, white U.S. Americans.

Another determinant of outgroup marriage was found to be residential proximity or the density factor. Propinquity affects the rates of intermarriage among all the categories studied but is particularly important for the Puerto Rican group. Where a particular Hispanic group is found to be densely concentrated, the incidence of intermarriage decreases. Thus, the strong relationship of group size and concentration within a particular geographic area to outgroup marriage cannot be overlooked.

One of the reasons posed for the exceptional intermarriage pattern among Puerto Ricans is the large number of Puerto Ricans residing in New York City. This situation very likely eliminates the necessity or the desire for Puerto Ricans to seek partners outside their group. A psychologist present at the Conference further extended this thesis by proposing the argument that perhaps there is a sense of security obtained by marrying endogamously as opposed to exposing oneself to the threats and pressures which may arise from outgroup marriage. This psychologist sees intra-group marriage as a mechanism which enhances self-esteem and self-worth for the individual.

In terms of residential choice, Reverend Fitzpatrick pointed out that many Hispanics who are marrying exogamously are also dispersing to small cities near the metropolitan area in Connecticut, New Jersey, and parts of Westchester. These new settlement patterns for Hispanics will probably lead to increasing rates of intermarriage for future generations as the concentration of available partners of the same ethnic group is reduced by the dispersion factor.

The discussion of the intermarriage study generated many questions from the audience, one in particular addressing a shortcoming in the investigatory process. It was suggested that had common-law or consensual unions been included, the results produced by the study might have differed significantly from the conclusions reached by only counting official registrations. The inclusion of cohabitating couples could very likely

have yielded lower rates of exogamy among Hispanics.

Another workshop participant suggested that the incidence of outgroup marriages may be attributed to an effort on the part of those Hispanics who are non-U.S. citizens to regularize their status. Therefore, current immigration laws and the fact that a marriage license application does not require any information pertaining to citizenship or immigration status of the applicant may be regarded as possible motivating factors which make outgroup marriage attractive for Hispanics.

The intermarriage study delves into numerous questions related to the assimilation process which need to be further explored. Among the authors' recommendations is the necessity for standardizing and expanding current marriage records with the aim of turning them into more useful tools for research purposes. Of even greater importance, is the need to direct further attention to explaining the distinctiveness of the Puerto Rican intermarriage pattern and its obvious variation with that of other Hispanic groups.

Overall, the Conference obtained its objective for it provided the researchers the opportunity to share their findings with a diverse audience composed of parties interested in the Hispanic condition throughout the city while allowing invited guests to contribute their individual perspectives, criticisms, and opinions.

The publication of research findings, although helpful, is not sufficient in itself to influence policy makers. Workshops of this kind, which disseminate research findings among professionals and public officials in specific areas, contribute in a concrete way to the formulation of culturally sensitive public policies.

RESEARCH REPORT

Selected Papers on the Puerto Rican Child Study being conducted at the Hispanic Research Center, presented at the Puerto Rican Family Institute Conference, New York, November 19, 1979.

THE PUERTO RICAN CHILD: A MINORITY AT RISK

By Ian A. Canino, Research Associate, Hispanic Research Center, and Assistant Clinical Professor, Department of Child Psychiatry, Albert Einstein College of Medicine

THIS PAPER focuses specifically on the interaction between the Puerto Rican child in New York City and the society he lives in and on how this interaction may produce undue stress that precipitates or sustains symptoms of mental illness.

Starting with the unborn child and the infant, some authors have postulated that the fetus may be vulnerable to the interpersonal tensions the mother may experience. These have been described as tensions stemming from marital discord, cultural disintegration, financial difficulties, and conception out of wedlock. Other conditions that have been described as producing a noxious effect on the fetus are the working conditions of the expectant mother and the witnessing of violence by her. We know that these are some of the stress factors affecting the inner-city woman.

It is well known that maternal addiction to drugs and alcohol produces noxious effects in the new-born. A recent report has indicated a higher than normal incidence of birth defects in children born to alcoholic mothers. Infants born to drug-addicted mothers evidence high rates of mortality and low birth weight. Infant mortality rates and low birth weight ratios are higher for black and Puerto Rican babies than for white babies, and are higher in New York City than in the nation as a whole.

This is particularly relevant because studies have demonstrated that low birth weight children are significantly overrepresented among the mentally subnormal in later life. This is coupled with the fact that these children come from poor areas where malnutrition is endemic, in itself another cause of lessened intellectual capacity. We are thus speaking of a population that is already constitutionally at risk of multiple physical illnesses and who will later be diagnosed in our mental health clinics as having behavioral disturbances such as hyperactivity secondary to minimal brain damage, lead intoxication, anemia, malnutrition, and mental retardation.

Many reports attest to the enormous importance of the first five years of life in an individual's development. In this period the child, through the development of self-esteem, individuation, trust, intellectual curiosity, sexual identity, and a healthy family relationship, lays the groundwork for his future growth. However, there are many areas of stress impinging upon this process. The stress a newborn baby with all its demands can cause in a family is well known. If we are talking of a young poor family already in social upheaval, the implications are enormous. It is reported that in 1974, 41 percent of Puerto Rican babies in the city were born out of wedlock and of these, more than a third were born to teenage mothers. Statistics from 1974-75 show an increase in children under the age of six enrolled in some form of full or part-time day care program. Let us hope that they are adequate and able to fulfill the multiple needs of these children since there are another 600,000 children under the age of six whose existing arrangements of care are unknown.

Of the preschool children dying of accidents in the city, 71 percent died from fire-related accidents in the home. Even more impressive is the fact that in

1974 more than one-half of child homicide victims were children under seven (30 percent of them, Puerto Rican) and approximately one-half of abused children were under the age of five. In the South Bronx and other areas of New York City, the infant mortality rate has been described as three times higher than the national average. Those infants who do survive face an environment of poor nutrition, multiple childhood diseases, poor housing, ineffective medical care, and poverty in general.

The impact of multiple family dislocations due to back-and-forth migration and family mobility within and without the neighborhoods – and within and without the family system – needs to be considered. Reports have been written on the difficulty an adult goes through when mourning the loss of his culture and the vicissitudes of identity he faces in confronting a new culture. Healthy coping mechanisms are required to adapt to a new neighborhood and family system. Compounding this situation is the high incidence of Hispanic children removed from their households and placed in foster care because of problems in the home. We know too well the many disputes between the family of origin, the foster home, the social agencies, and the legal system. They all converge to create a chaotic situation for the child.

We now enter the school years of our Hispanic children. This is a time in the child's development when he starts to relate to society at large. In 1974-75 the Hispanic child accounted for 23 percent of the total school population in New York City. The impact on these children brought about by frequent shifting of classroom teachers unfamiliar with their language and culture and the paucity of adequate tests to evaluate their school performance need to be further evaluated. Some authors have stated that voluntary mutism is prevalent in kindergarten children of immigrant non-English-speaking families.

The impact of discrimination, an inadequate school system unable to meet the special needs of the Hispanic child, and a hostile environment are thus liable to lead to school failure. It is no wonder then that a very high suspension rate was found among black and Puerto Rican students in 1973-74.

Difficulties around dating and other sexual mores that clash with the traditional culture are conducive to stress in the Hispanic adolescent. The differences between the family's child-rearing practices and their children's newly acquired set of values lead to chronic unresolved conflicts within the family. Lack of adequate recreational facilities and a paucity of part-time and summer jobs for this population increase the difficulties. If the Hispanic child or adolescent develops mental health problems and is referred to an agency not adequately sensitized to Hispanic culture, then he or she will encounter language difficulties which will prevent the making of an adequate diagnosis and the establishment of appropriate therapeutic intervention.

It is no wonder then that Hispanic adolescents are reported to have more than double the rate of psychiatric hospitalizations than non-Puerto Rican adolescents. One report on the admission rates to state hospitals in New York State states that there was a larger incidence of admissions of Puerto Ricans, especially of the young male population, as compared to the rest of the population. It was also found that the second generation of large ethnic groups in New York State had lower rates of first admissions than the first generation. This was the opposite for the Puerto Rican population. Intergenerational gaps and conflicts become particularly relevant with this age group.

In conclusion, social, environmental, economic, and political factors are rendering this particularly vulnerable population of children subject to acute and potentially prolonged psychological and physical distress. The urban Hispanic child needs mental health programs relating to his culture and ethnic background. Adequately staffed multi-disciplinary bicultural and bilingual programs that deal with the combined physical, psychological, and social needs of these children are few or non-existent. Funded research to study more effective primary intervention programs and to develop better tools for assessment of this population is urgently needed. Active involvement of Hispanic mental health professionals is also urged. Finally, an invitation should be extended to those countless numbers of Hispanic children who have dealt successfully with principals, teachers, welfare workers, juvenile authorites, mental health clinics, building superintendents, pimps, drug addicts, sickness and separations and have remained relatively unscathed. They will be our best teachers.

DATA ISSUES OF THE PUERTO RICAN CHILD PROJECT

By Brian Earley, Research Associate, Hispanic Research Center

THE INITIAL HYPOTHESIS of the Puerto Rican Child Study is that Puerto Rican children experience greater socio-environmental stress than do other children, thus placing them at higher risk to mental health problems. Among the sources of this stress is the subordinate socioeconomic position of New York Puerto Ricans which is further compounded by the nature of the migration experience, the existence of pervasive discrimination, and the multiple adjustments required by movement into a highly industrialized and urbanized environment. In turn, all of the above factors impact heavily upon the structure and functioning of the Hispanic family, thus putting its function as a stabilizing agent in the life of the child in jeopardy.

The major objectives of the Puerto Rican child study are: (1) to bring together the available data bearing upon the mental health of Puerto Rican children, and (2) to review the clinical, socio-cultural, and epidemiological literature relevant to the mental health of Puerto Rican children. We will thus begin to create a mental health profile of Puerto Rican children and to evaluate the quality of the available data.

In evaluating the data our concerns

were the following: How comprehensive is the available data? What areas suffer from a lack of data? What are the sources of these data deficiences? To what extent might they be remedied? Finally, based upon the answers to these questions, we ask, with what reliability can conclusions be drawn from the available data and where do these conclusions lead in terms of designing further research?

During the initial stages of this research, over fifty representatives of public and private agencies, community mental health centers, interested researchers, and community groups were interviewed. These individuals were asked to comment on the nature and availability of their own data bases, and to suggest possible additional sources of data which we might investigate. Among those contacted were the New York State Office of Mental Health, the New York City Department of Mental Health, the New York City Board of Health, the Foundation for Child Development, the New York City Board of Education, the Bureau of Child Guidance, and the Puerto Rican Family Institute. Very few were able to directly provide any suitable data or refer us to sources which had usable data.

This phase of the project revealed that relevant sources of data were nonexistent, incomplete, lacking in conceptual clarity, or untabulated. A point often expressed was that personnel and funding were inadequate for such endeavors, or that the collection of data on ethnicity was a potentially controversial issue. This perspective, while understandable given the misuse of such data in the past, presents a major stumbling block to social research in which there is a responsible concern for ethnic differences.

Several sources of data did provide information regarding the relative health status of Puerto Rican children. These were the Board of Education's ethnic census of handicapped children and the New York State Department of Mental Hygiene data on the use of local facilities. Although we are still analyzing these data, we have found that while Puerto Rican children are not over-represented among handicapped children, they do exhibit a differential pattern in regard to the type of handicap category to which they are assigned. At the same time, their handicaps appear to be judged as more severe than is the case with non-Puerto Rican children. These findings suggest that additional information regarding evaluation and placement procedures, program alternatives, and placement outcomes is needed for a comprehensive interpretation and evaluation of the health profile presented by the data.

For New York City, data on mental health problems and retardation by racial/ethnic group are available from records kept by the New York State Department of Mental Hygiene. These data are based upon an interview form common to all state-licensed facilities. It is the only available source of city-wide mental health data which include demographic variables.

Our ongoing analysis of the data reveals that Puerto Rican children display considerably higher rates of admission interviews than do either black or non-Hispanic white children. They also present unique patterns of prior health service utilization, sources of referral, and symptomatology. The data thus present Puerto Rican children as maintaining a distinct mental health profile.

The major methodological difficulty confronting the analyst is the widespread lack of reporting of the interview form. The Department of Mental Hygiene has estimated that for New York City during the fiscal year 1976-77, only 52 percent of all forms were sent to Albany. The rate of reporting also varies by borough, ranging from a high of 68 percent reporting in Queens to a low of 37 percent in Manhattan. Clearly, this is a major source of potential bias.

Another area of difficulty for the researcher is the voluntary status of certain items on the form. Questions on ethnic identity present a difficult problem for both interviewer and researcher. The question on ethnic identity is never actually asked of the client; instead, the interviewer is directed to make this judgment based upon the content of the interview. For this reason, a considerable portion of the clients are judged to be of unknown ethnicity. The lack of racial/ethnic identification is particularly acute among children. The proportion of children aged 13 and under of unreported ethnicity is 23 percent, twice the overall rate. Among children three years old and less, 12 percent were of unreported ethnicity, compared to 35 percent of those children between 6 and 8 years old. These variations suggest that a policy of not reporting ethnicity may exist among certain interviewers or at certain facilities. We see then that while data collected by the N.Y. State Department of Mental Hygiene are the most extensive available, comparative analysis based upon these data must proceed carefully with the researcher aware of the potentially misleading methodological inadequacies of the data.

In summary, the data collection phase of the Puerto Rican project revealed that very few sources of usable data are presently available for examining the physical and mental health of Puerto Rican children. It is equally clear that a large number of persons who deal with child-related issues would be interested in such data, but that these individuals are generally unaware of how little data are actually available. It is one of the main functions of the Hispanic Research Center in general and of the Puerto Rican Child Project in particular to carry out the type of research needed both to document the existing research difficulties and to serve as a point of reference from which further research in such areas may be carried out.

THE INTELLECTUAL ASSESSMENT OF HISPANIC CHILDREN: PROBLEMS AND ALTERNATIVES

By Rose Marie Hurrell, Research Assistant, Hispanic Research Center

AN EXAMINATION of the literature concerning the intellectual assessment of Hispanic children reveals a body of research permeated with controversy. This controversy centers on the ambiguous nature of present-day psychological tests in assessing the intellectual abilities of Hispanic and other minority children.

In the past, the bulk of the research dealing with the intellectual assessment of Hispanic children has relied extensively upon the use of standardized intelligence tests or translations of these

tests. In general, results obtained from studies employing standardized intelligence tests have indicated that Hispanic children demonstrate an intellectual deficit, particularly when verbal IQ tests are used as instruments of assessment. However, a number of studies using non-verbal intelligence tests have reported higher IQ scores in Puerto Rican, Mexican-American, and Spanish-American children.

Several studies have compared the performance of Hispanic children on English and Spanish versions of the same intelligence test. In some cases, scores obtained on the Spanish version were higher than scores obtained on the standard English version. For the most part, however, the use of Spanish translations has not resulted in higher IQ scores for Spanish-speaking children.

A number of factors have been linked to the poor performance of Hispanic children on standardized intelligence tests. Low socioeconomic status has been found to be an important variable in studies in which Puerto Rican and other Hispanic children scored significantly lower than other groups. A second factor commonly identified is bilingualism. Early research concerning the effects of bilingualism on intelligence often resulted in evidence suggesting negative consequences. However, recent trends indicate a positive relationship between bilingualism and intellectual development. Inferior test performance has also been linked to attitudinal and motivational factors which may be culturally determined. Finally, it has been demonstrated that characteristics related to the examiner, such as ethnic group membership and style of administration, may influence test performance.

Because the research is characterized by a diversity of approaches, methods, and instruments, a number of difficulties are encountered in attempting a meaningful interpretation of the data. Differences in the nature and characteristics of the samples and, in some cases, lack of adequate controls seriously hamper the drawing of valid conclusions. The use of both verbal and nonverbal intelligence tests has produced findings which are inconsistent and therefore difficult to evaluate. In addition, the influence of cultural factors raises serious questions concerning the appropriateness of these tests for use with Hispanic children. While the influence of cultural factors on verbal tests has long been recognized, recent research has indicated that nonverbal tests may be just as culturally loaded. Regardless of the type of test, the operation of cultural factors mandates cautious interpretation of test results.

In cases in which translations have been administered, the failure of Spanish versions to produce higher IQ scores with Hispanic children may be related to difficulties associated with the use of translations. Meaning may be lost in translation or the level of difficulty may be altered. Translations also result in problems regarding comparability of norms and equivalence of scores.

Apart from these difficulties, questions concerning the fairness and appropriateness of using standardized intelligence tests with Hispanic children remain a central issue. The narrow range of mental abilities which are measured by intelligence tests, their failure to provide measures of qualitative differences in modes of problem-solving, their neglect of the influence of cultural experiences and socialization practices on attitude, motivation, and personality patterns, and their failure to consider the interdependence of mental functioning and personality structure have been cited as a few of these limitations.

It is evident that current assessment methods are inadequate for use with Hispanic children as well as children from other ethnic minorities. The use of standardized intelligence tests, the principal instrument employed in most studies, presents numerous problems. Attempts to resolve these problems have resulted in the development of different approaches which provide alternatives to conventional assessment methods. Two of these approaches hold promise for use with Hispanic children in particular.

The first approach is derived from a "pluralistic sociocultural" perspective and provides a technique which attempts to account for sociocultural factors in the evaluation of test results. Currently being employed with Mexican-American children, the approach calls for an individual's IQ score to be interpreted in relation to both the standardized norms for the test and norms developed for his or her own sociocultural group. The developers of this technique assert that the use of multiple normative frameworks provides a more accurate estimate of intellectual ability.

The second approach is closely linked to the developmental theories of Jean Piaget and focuses on the assessment of developmental levels of cognitive functioning. Research employing this approach with Mexican-American children has indicated that these children perform within the range of expected levels of cognitive development for given ages. In addition, results have indicated no ethnic group differences between the Mexican-American children and their Anglo-American counterparts.

Although progress toward solving some of the problems encountered when attempting assessment of Hispanic children has been made, satisfactory solutions have not been achieved. At present, it is not clear whether these solutions will require modification or abandonment of current assessment methods. It is likely, however, that attainment of these solutions awaits the emergence of new and innovative approaches. The resources necessary for the development and evaluation of these approaches lie within the domain of systematic research. Initial steps, providing a necessary foundation, have already been taken. These steps are only a beginning, however, and must be extended through continued research effort and application.

THE HISPANIC CHILD: A MULTIDIMENSIONAL APPROACH TO MENTAL HEALTH

By Isaura M. Linares, Research Assistant, Hispanic Research Center

MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH continues to be in an evolving state of development, although an increasing awareness of the importance of mental health has resulted in an acceleration of scientific investigation. This research, while focusing on both the individual and the group aspects of mental health, has proceeded from, and employed the methodology of, several distinct per-

spectives.

Since mental health is determined by a multiplicity of social factors, different research orientations designed to measure various social phenomena can potentially yield information on mental health issues. Surprisingly, however, in their research, few investigators have taken a multi-dimensional approach that would reflect the diversity of social conditions and their influences upon mental health.

Aware of the need for such studies, the Hispanic Research Center has a strong commitment to research efforts which reflect the multi-dimensional characteristics of mental health. The Puerto Rican Child Project is an example of this ongoing commitment. It attempts to identify both the mental health status and the mental health needs of Puerto Rican children by evaluating the impact of psychological, physical, environmental, and socio-cultural factors on the development of the Puerto Rican child. The project adopts the perspective that an assessment of the mental health of Hispanic children must consider the impact upon children of potentially stress-laden social conditions. Since the sources of stress impacting upon urban, low socio-economic children are multi-dimensional and extensive, an examination of the relationship existing among these sets of facts is of considerable importance.

A number of investigations have attempted to assess Hispanic children's mental health status in terms of psychological variables alone. Although the results of these investigations have contributed significantly to the understanding of mental health, they may be misleading if analyzed without an awareness of parallel research which has proceeded from alternative frameworks. For instance, disorders often diagnosed as being essentially psychologically based, such as apathy, depression, loss of ambition, reduced attention span, irritability, and sickliness may also be the consequence of malnutrition or undernutrition. An investigator examining such disorders without considering the possible effects of nutritional problems might be led to make erroneous conclusions about the mental health of children suffering from these conditions.

Another important dimension which cannot be ignored when assessing mental health needs is the role of the Hispanic child's environment. Research has shown that environmental factors such as living in overcrowded housing and deteriorated neighborhoods may influence family life, child rearing practices, and child development. At the same time, while environmental factors may have a significant effect on mental health, they may also have important limitations when viewed alone.

An example of the relationship between environmental factors and mental health is the research that has been done concerning "pica." Pica has been defined as the purposeful, habitual, and compulsive appetite for non-food items such as clay, plaster, paint chips, and dirt. Some studies have labeled pica a psychological disorder and suggest psychotherapy as a treatment for this problem. Such treatment may be helpful but it should not underestimate the reality that pica is also an environmental problem. If Hispanic children were not obliged because of their socio-economic conditions to live in lead-filled, deteriorated housing, there would be less probability for the occurrence of pica. The brain damage caused by this constant low-level exposure to lead also creates a medical problem.

Another area which should be considered in the assessment of the mental health needs of Hispanic children is the importance of socio-cultural patterns. Research has shown that socio-cultural variation in family structure, parental practices, and ethnic background may exert significantly different influences on psychological development and behavior. In addition, patterns of emotional expressiveness, use of language, and social functioning have been found to vary according to cultural groups. Therefore, the proper assessment of the mental health needs of Hispanic children can be conducted only with an awareness of the unique socio-cultural patterns affecting their behavior.

In conclusion, assessment of Hispanic children's mental health needs is often characterized by the use of unidimensional approaches. These approaches have typically concentrated on one of the following categories: degree of psychological adjustment, the effects of the child's physical health status, the influence of a particular environmental setting, and the characteristics of socio-cultural patterns shared with others.

Although research has indicated certain areas of overlap and ambiguity among these aspects of mental health, few studies have attempted to fully examine the nature of their relationship, especially as it pertains to ethnic and racial minorities.

While we recognize that many investigators have long been aware of the need for a multi-dimensional approach to mental health research, the Hispanic Research Center believes that we must do more than continue to repeat and acknowledge the need for such an approach. The Puerto Rican Child Project reflects this view by utilizing the resources of a multi-disciplinary research team consisting of a child psychiatrist, a sociologist, an anthropologist, a clinical psychologist, a developmental psychologist, and a social worker. It is only through a multi-dimensional perspective that our research can come close to an accurate assessment of the mental health needs of Hispanic children.

An Alternative Approach to the Study of Lower Socioeconomic Status, Urban Puerto Rican Children

By Damaris Lugo-Frey, Research Assistant, Hispanic Research Center

SINCE A LARGE NUMBER of Puerto Rican and other Hispanic children live in poverty, an attempt to understand more clearly the child from this background is essential in determining more accurately the mental health needs of these children. This Paper will briefly discuss some ways in which the Puerto Rican child from a lower socioeconomic status, urban background has been described in the literature.

La Vietes[1], for example, in discussing the Puerto Rican child's adaptation to a

school setting, writes:

> "Past social and developmental experiences have not prepared him cognitively nor emotionally for the American school...He is dependent and passive, needing more direction and structure than may be available in a large class. He has had no social experiences to aid him in interactions with a variety of children. He is neither time-oriented nor task-oriented. He has little investment in working for future goals. He responds more to people than tasks. His functional IQ is lower than average even when tested in Spanish and on 'culture free' tests, although there is evidence that it approaches average when he is given a great deal of encouragement and warmth."

Such a description is often typical of how the lower socioeconomic level Puerto Rican child is portrayed in the literature. It presents a stereotyped view.

Montiel[2], in writing on the Chicano family, criticizes the negative manner in which Hispanics and other minorities have been described in the literature. Adjectives such as "discouraged" and "culturally deprived" dominate the literature. These views focus on what is negative rather than on the strengths of these children.

Stella Chess[3], in writing about the concept of the "disadvantaged child," questions the usefulness of the term. According to Chess, "it assumes a homogeneous group embracing all lower class youngsters. This lack of differentiation produces not a diagnostic tool but a stereotype. The stereotype, no matter how benevolently intended, ignores the rich diversity within a group."

Riessman[4], argues that terms such as the "disadvantaged child" emphasize weakness, inadequacy, and deficiency. They perpetuate a negative view of these children. In looking at verbal and cognitive skills of inner city children, Riessman cites research which is contrary to the popular belief that lower socio-economic level urban children are less verbal than their middle-class counterparts. On word-association tests in this study, inner city children tended to give responses that were less conventional, more unusual, original and independent. They also exhibited an increased flexibility and a tendency to be more visual with language. It is suggested by this research that this flexibility with language and increased sensitivity to visual, tactile, and kinesthetic cues evidenced in inner city children resemble many of the characteristics found in creative individuals.

Riessman also stresses that cultural values and beliefs can be considered strengths. His attempts to identify the strengths of lower socioeconomic level, urban children, particularly how a specific culture has its own strong points, provides a useful model for the study of the Puerto Rican child. I would like to suggest several values of the Puerto Rican culture which can be considered strengths. It is hoped that this preliminary discussion will stimulate further investigation into other strengths of the Puerto Rican culture.

One of the major strengths which characterize the Puerto Rican culture is the importance of the family. Responsibility to and concern for the family are values which are stressed within this culture. The child thus learns to develop a strong concern for and sensitivity to the needs of others.

Respect for an individual's worth and dignity as a human being is another value often attributed to Puerto Rican culture. This value underlies many relationships and although one may joke with another person, it is expected that one will not offend the other person. One then wonders if this respect for an individual's worth, regardless of social status, provides a foundation for a more humanistic view of people which other cultural groups may not stress as strongly.

Furthermore, the importance of the extended family within Puerto Rican culture can also be considered a strength. Although there is a need to question the tendency in the literature to idealize the extended family as a source of unceasing emotional support, extended family support is evidenced in varying degrees. This need not be limited to one's natural family but can also include others such as "compadres" or godparents. The child is often reminded that if anything should happen to his parents, his godparents will assume his care. This could be viewed as an added source of psychological security for the child.

In conclusion, we have criticized some approaches to the study of urban Puerto Rican children of low socioeconomic background, approaches which have served to perpetuate a negative and stereotyped view of these children and which are not useful in the assessment and treatment of the mental health needs of this population. An alternative approach, one that focuses on the strengths of this population, has been suggested. By examining the contributions of the culture and the immediate urban environment, we can begin to better assess the strengths of Puerto Rican children. By placing an emphasis on the strong points rather than on the weaknesses of Puerto Rican, inner city children, one will be able to provide a more useful and constructive foundation for appropriate interventions in mental health.

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Hispanic Research Center: Research Bulletin

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Stasia Madrigal, Editor, Hispanic Research Center, Fordham University, Thebaud Hall, Bronx, New York 10458. Telephone: (212) 933-2233.

NEW APPOINTMENTS

The Hispanic Research Center has made the following appointments to its research staff:

Dr. Giuseppe Costantino, psychologist, is Chief Psychologist at the Lutheran Mental Health Center in New York. He will be working with the Hispanic Research Center as a Research Associate and in that capacity he will be the principal investigator of a three-year study, recently funded by the National Institute of Mental Health, which will assess the effectiveness of folktale therapy in treating Puerto Rican children with behavioral disorders.

Dr. Anthony J. DeVito, psychologist, is Assistant Director of the Counseling Center at Fordham University. He worked with Dr. Giuseppe Costantino in developing the grant proposal for the above-mentioned study of folktale therapy in treating Puerto Rican children. He has been appointed Research Associate of the Hispanic Research Center and will continue to work with Dr. Costantino as methodologist and statistician for the new study which will commence shortly.

Dr. Ruth Zambrana, sociologist, is Faculty Instructor and Research Associate of the Mount Sinai School of Medicine, Department of Community Medicine, Division of Behavioral Sciences. As a Research Associate of the Hispanic Research Center, Dr. Zambrana will develop research in the area of Hispanic women, with a particular focus on Puerto Rican single-parent families. She is also in the process of organizing a conference which will bring together researchers and practitioners who are interested in the particular needs of Hispanic women in the areas of health and labor force participation.

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